

# **FAMILY PLANNING COUNCIL OF IOWA**

## **TESTIMONY TO THE IOWA COUNCIL ON HUMAN SERVICES July 2019**

The Family Planning Council of Iowa is a private non-profit organization dedicated to promoting access to family planning and reproductive health care for all Iowans through direct services, public education and advocacy, professional training, and collaboration.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to the Iowa Council on Human Services regarding the FY2021 budget process.

We once again thank the Council on Human Services for its continued support for the provision of family planning services in Iowa. The Council consistently demonstrates its awareness and understanding of the value of providing family planning services. It has shown its leadership through its understanding of the positive impact family planning services have on lessening the need for other services by the Department; through its recognition that these services help Medicaid members and other vulnerable populations stabilize their lives and plan for the future; and by appreciating the benefits of family planning services to ensure healthy birth outcomes. The Council understands the fiscal value of family planning services through the reduction of unintended pregnancies and the subsequent costs to the state.

Thank you to the Council for its strong stance and clear message about its support for family planning services.

Beginning July 1, 2017 Iowa discontinued the highly successful Medicaid Family Planning Waiver and replaced it with a state funded family planning program – the Family Planning Program (FPP). For the past two years we have expressed our concern about the changed program. It continues to be difficult to assess how the program is working due to a significant lack of information by the Department of Human Services about the program, how it is working and what DHS is doing to increase access to these valuable family planning services.

We ask the Council on Human Services to direct the Department of Human Services to produce quarterly reports using key data elements already determined through a work group established by the Department that met in the fall of 2017. We ask that those quarterly reports be compared to the same quarter of the previous year and that the reports are made beginning with 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter FY2018 (July 1-Sept 30, 2017). We also

request that the reports are made available to the public. This will provide the Council and the public the information needed to develop ways to help move the project forward.

We also ask the Council to support continued funding of the program.

**Community Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program:**

Providing good, factual information and education about preventing unintended pregnancies is another important mechanism for prevention. It is especially important that teens receive honest, age appropriate, medically accurate, evidence-based information about preventing pregnancies. It is also important that teens are provided with the lessons and life skills to enable them to make good decisions regarding avoiding unintended pregnancies. Over the years, the Department of Human Services has funded the Community Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program (CAPPP). This program, using Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds, requires that communities come together to develop programs for their area to work with teens on preventing pregnancy. This required collaboration of various types of providers assures that the funded programs reflect the needs of the community. We ask that this program continue to be funded.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

*Oversight of the State Family Planning Program:*

Family planning services play a key role in helping individuals and families move out of poverty. It is important to know and understand how the State Family Planning program is working and what needs to be done to achieve the goals of the program.

We request the Council on Human Services direct the Department of Human Services to develop and distribute Quarterly Reports on the Family Planning Program (FFP). The Quarterly Reports should:

- 1) Utilize data elements identified by FFP Workgroup
- 2) Compare data elements to same quarter of previous year
- 3) Begin Quarterly Reports with 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter FY2018

*Continued funding of the State Family Planning Program:*

We request the Council on Human Services support the continued funding of the State Family Planning Program.

*Continued Support of Funding for the Community Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Programs:*

Education and information to young people is an additional means of helping avoid unintended pregnancies. The Community Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention funds community developed programs focusing on this issue.

We ask the Council to continue to support this program.

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